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Middle East, Africa, South Asia

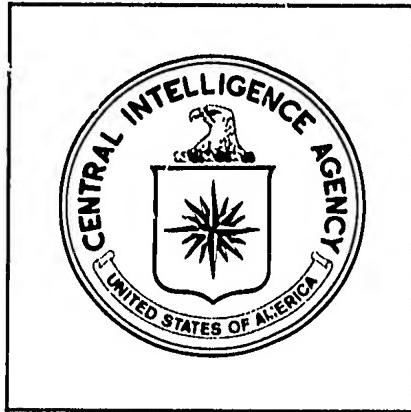
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MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA - SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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~~SECRET~~Jordan*Army Morale Up, But Problems Still Exist*

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Morale in Jordan's armed forces reportedly has improved significantly over the past few months, chiefly as the result of pay raises and improved officers' housing. Nevertheless, senior officers, [REDACTED] are distressed over several problems that they believe could seriously affect the forces' combat efficiency.

These officers are concerned that the army, because of the minimal role it played in the October 1973 war, has become a less aggressive force than it was formerly. This decline in esprit, together with Jordan's lack of an effective air defense system, they believe, places the armed forces in a highly vulnerable position in the event of hostilities.

The officers also continue to be bothered by what they regard as the poor quality of leadership in the army, particularly with regard to tactical and strategic planning. The absence of broad planning, they say, will mean that the armed forces will play only a reactive role in a new war. Exercises held for King Husayn are said to be set pieces conducted with advance knowledge that the King would be visiting the units concerned. In addition, the officers claim that training has been seriously curtailed because of shortages of fuel and ammunition and that staff officers offer little supervision over such training activities as are undertaken unless they know that senior officers will be present.

The critical officers reportedly believe, finally, that the good effect on morale of the recent pay increase was diluted because it was insufficient to meet the rising cost of living and because it turned out to be less than rumors had led the military to expect. While armed forces personnel are supposed to be able to buy basic commodities through the commissary system, in reality enlisted men often find that officers have bought all available supplies of such items. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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~~SECRET~~Kuwait*Long-Term Changes in Socio-Political Structure Anticipated*

The US embassy in Kuwait believes that Kuwaiti society will undergo a dramatic reshaping during the next decade. The embassy judges that the existing pattern, characterized by an emphasis on tribal and family membership as a determinant of one's place in life, will be replaced by a "social democratic" system in which the Sabahs--the ruling family--will lose much of their power.

The results of the recent parliamentary election are seen by the embassy as a harbinger of future changes. Although the Sabahs and their traditional tribal allies captured a majority of the 50 assembly seats, many young liberals were elected. The embassy sees these newcomers as a powerful social force, anxious to introduce basic changes in Kuwaiti life such as the legalization of political parties, giving trade unions the right to strike and bargain, granting equal rights to women, and generally relaxing restrictions imposed by Islam or the Sabahs.

Another catalyst for change will be the military, according to the embassy. Thus far, the officer corps has been content to play its professional military role, but this will almost certainly change. The embassy sees the military eventually wanting more of a "piece of the action," higher pay and benefits, and a greater voice in the setting of national policy.

Kuwait's large expatriate community--estimated to make up 60 percent of the country's 900,000 inhabitants--may also become a pressure group interested in bettering its lot and acquiring a bigger share of the country's affluence. These expatriates, which include about 200,000 Palestinians, hold key posts in government and commerce, but the regime considers them outsiders and has denied them many of the benefits accorded citizens. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Angola*Jonas Savimbi and UNITA*

During the past several months, Jonas Savimbi, leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, has emerged as the most active and politically skillful of Angola's three nationalist leaders. This new role is especially surprising in view of Savimbi's position throughout the Angolan insurgency as the little-known head of the territory's smallest and seemingly least effective nationalist group.

It was largely because of Savimbi's service as an intermediary that Angola's two other nationalist leaders, Holden Roberto and Agostinho Neto, agreed to a meeting of the three leaders in Mombasa, Kenya, in early January. There, the three worked out a common position to present to the Portuguese several days later in negotiations that led to the independence accord.

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[REDACTED] Savimbi was the most articulate and best informed of the insurgent leaders.

Since those negotiations, Savimbi has been politically active in the territory while his rivals remained outside Angola. Prior to his arrival in Luanda for the installation of the transitional government on January 31, Savimbi made a whistle-stop tour through several important towns in central Angola. Officials from the US consulate were impressed by the "size, good humor, and organization" of the reception Savimbi received at two of the stops and by the notable participation of whites. According to the US observers, Savimbi made an effective presentation, calling for increased production, racial cooperation, and better educational opportunities, without sounding ideological or controversial. Savimbi reportedly is now beginning to receive sizable financial assistance from well-to-do whites in central Angola.

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Savimbi apparently believes that his organization can attract enough support to give it a major policy-making voice in a coalition government. The campaign for that support will not be easy, despite Savimbi's wide popularity in central and southern Angola. In the north, particularly around Luanda, the National Union will run into strong rural support for Holden Roberto's National Front for the Liberation of Angola and equally intense urban support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. Savimbi's organization may be on a collision course with the Popular Movement because of its assumption of the labor portfolio in the transitional government in an attempt to counter the Popular Movement's strong influence over organized labor in the territory.

Although it is not clear whether Savimbi's newly-displayed political skills can win him a leading role in an independent Angola, he will not be easily, if at all, overshadowed by his more powerful and better-known rivals. He is off to a fast start and has avoided controversy and ideological commitments, a tactic that may work to his political advantage over the long run.

Several other factors are likely to contribute heavily to Savimbi's political success. His popularity is based on tribal ties with the Ovimbundu, the largest single ethnic group in Angola. They inhabit the densely populated and prosperous central highlands, where Savimbi established the National Union in 1966. These tribal ties give him a potential political base out of proportion to the size of his organization's military forces, which numbers approximately 3,000 trained troops.

The central highlands also is an important agricultural center and a main marshalling point on the Benguela Railroad, Angola's major transportation network. The railroad provides an important source of revenue for Angola as a carrier of copper from Zaire and Zambia.

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In addition, Savimbi maintained his headquarters inside Angola during the insurgency and operated without significant foreign support. This has enabled him to claim he is not obligated to or under the influence of foreign powers.

Savimbi's ability to survive inside Angola has prompted his rivals to charge that he made a deal with the Portuguese. This accusation has not hurt him so far, however, and seems unlikely to do so in the future, even though there was an informal ceasefire between his forces and the Portuguese during the later years of the insurgency. This arrangement existed largely because the Portuguese found it convenient to leave the National Union as a buffer between them and Popular Movement forces in eastern Angola. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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~~SECRET~~Tanzania*Party Role Strengthened*

President Julius Nyerere has decided to formalize the political supremacy of his party, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), over the government.

TANU's central committee--the party's top policy making body--met in late January under Nyerere's chairmanship and took a number of steps intended to strengthen both its own and the party's position. The government was directed to prepare two constitutional amendments, one institutionalizing TANU as the top policy making organ in the country, the other formalizing Tanzania's status as a "socialist state." The central committee, moreover, asserted its power to direct government ministers to appear before it and TANU subcommittees to give an accounting of their ministries' operations.

The changes will make little difference politically because TANU is already the sole legal party and has long formulated official policy. The US embassy in Dar es Salaam comments, however, that the changes do represent another step in the country's evolution toward a socialist political system that closely regulates the daily life and activities of all citizens. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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